

SN. 10/603,590

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. MITS:052

IN THE CLAIMS

*The status of the claims as presently amended is as follows:*

1. *(Currently Amended)* An exhaust emission control apparatus for an internal combustion engine, comprising:

a control device that provides control to suspend combustion of at least one of cylinders according to an operating state of the internal combustion engine;

a first exhaust passage connected to the at least one suspended cylinder[[s]];

a second exhaust passage connected to operating cylinders other than the at least one suspended cylinder[[s]];

a first exhaust purifying catalyst disposed in said first exhaust passage; and

a second exhaust purifying catalyst disposed in said second exhaust passage[; and]],

[[a]] wherein the first exhaust purifying catalyst disposed in said first exhaust passage and havinghas a higher capability to purify exhaust gas than said second exhaust purifying catalyst.

2. *(Currently Amended)* An exhaust emission control apparatus for an internal combustion engine according to claim 1, wherein said control device is operable when combustion of the at least one suspended cylinder[[s]] is suspended, for providing control to stop supply of fuel to the at least one suspended cylinder[[s]] first, and then stop at least one of an intake valve and an exhaust valve of the at least one suspended cylinder[[s]] when a predetermined period of time has elapsed after the supply of fuel is stopped.

3. *(Original)* An exhaust emission control apparatus for an internal combustion engine according to claim 1, wherein said first exhaust purifying catalyst contains a larger amount of noble metal than said second exhaust purifying catalyst.

4. *(Original)* An exhaust emission control apparatus for an internal combustion engine according to claim 1, wherein said first exhaust purifying catalyst is a NOX occluding catalyst capable of occluding NOX in exhaust gas.

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5. *(Original)* An exhaust emission control apparatus for an internal combustion engine according to claim 1, wherein said first exhaust purifying catalyst has a larger catalytic capacity than said second exhaust purifying catalyst.

6. *(Original)* An exhaust emission control apparatus for an internal combustion engine according to claim 1, wherein the internal combustion engine comprises a V shape internal combustion engine.

7. *(Currently Amended)* An exhaust emission control apparatus for an internal combustion engine according to claim 6, wherein the at least one suspended cylinder[[s]] constitutes one bank of the V shape internal combustion engine, and the operating cylinders constitute another bank of the V shaped internal combustion engine.